

agenda

A QUARTERLY INFORMATION SOURCE FOR OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR FRIENDS

WINTER 2009 Volume 18, No. 1

Milwaukee County Department on Aging • (414) 289-6874 • www.milwaukee.gov/county/aging

Volunteer Opportunities and YOU



The Milwaukee County Dept on Aging Senior Citizen Hall of Fame honors volunteers. There are many programs and organizations that recognize volunteers, but very few

award winning volunteers are driven by the accolades they may receive.

Most volunteer because they want to “give back,”

“make a difference”, and “afford someone an opportunity they might otherwise not have”. Volunteers very often do not advertise their involvement with the charitable activities; in short, most are not offering their time for the fame or accolades. Some would tell you that they do it for a very selfish reason; it makes them feel good!

Older adults who volunteer are likely to experience health benefits related to longevity, mobility, and mental health; these benefits can be measured in people who volunteer as little as two hours per week. Some older adults volunteer within their profession to

maintain connections; others seek volunteer opportunities where they will be learning new skills.

Volunteer opportunities are available for people with all levels of skills and/or abilities.

Some homebound individuals may offer their talents to agencies who are looking for people to make telephone calls to other homebound people. Most volunteer recruiters are willing to train the volunteer in the job they want them to do...you pick the type of job and the time you are willing commit. Please consider joining those that already know the joys of volunteering.

Put Life Back in Your Life

Learn More about the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP)

CDSMP is a six-week interactive workshop developed by Stanford University to help people with ongoing health conditions. In Wisconsin, the workshop is offered under the name Living Well with Chronic Conditions.

How to live life on your own terms

To live well with chronic illness, try learning from others

who have a chronic condition. Stanford University's self-management workshops, for example, are led by two people, at least one of whom has a chronic disease.

Set your goals

Create clear goals for everything from exercise to nutrition. If you have arthritis and you need to strengthen muscles around joints, don't

just tell yourself you need to do it. Make a list of specific weekly objectives, from exercise reps to the days you'll do them. It won't just help your body; it'll put you in charge of your treatment.

Face your feelings

Physical symptoms aren't the only challenge. Anger, fear, depression, and isolation often accompany chronic ill-

ness. A support group can be a therapeutic way to help you confront these issues.

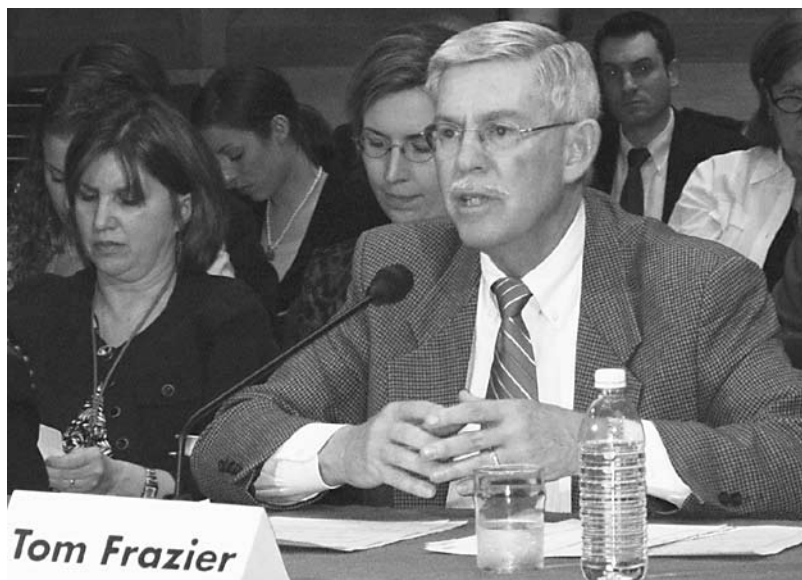
Live your life

Visualize the life you want—and do what it takes to achieve it, from hobbies to an active social life to getting a job. Manage the illness; don't let it define you

Workshops are offered throughout the state, and more importantly, throughout Milwaukee County. For more information on dates, times, and locations, please call Jennifer at (414)-289-6352.

From the Director

Stephanie Sue Stein, Director,
Milwaukee County Department on Aging



Tom Frazier testifying about Senior Care in front of
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging.

Tom Frazier Betters Lives

Professional careers can be measured by length of service or by depth of service. Tom Frazier's career as Executive Director of the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups by both measurements is astonishing.

For 26 years, Tom has led all of us in a powerful grassroots movement that has bettered the lives of every senior — perhaps every citizen — of this state. It is clear that without Tom's persistent and persuasive advocacy, Wisconsin would have lost the SeniorCare prescription drug program. And without Tom's skilled determination to *keep the community promise*, the Family Care long-term care program would not exist.

Tom says often that it took all of us professionals and volunteers, elected and appointed, to do this good work. However, without Tom's vision, knowledge, and organizing ability, we could not have succeeded.

I look forward to Tom's next contributions to better the lives of all — I know they will be significant.

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups Volunteer Benefits Counseling Program

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups (CWAG) has partnered with the state of Wisconsin's Department of Health Services to offer Milwaukee County residents the Volunteer Benefits Counseling Program. This program is both an opportunity to get involved with your community as well as a valuable resource to connect Medicare beneficiaries with important public benefits. Volunteers are given indepth training on programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, SeniorCare, and the Medicare Part D Low Income Subsidy. Volunteers then meet with clients in a one-on-one setting to assess the benefits to which they may be entitled and then assist clients with filling out appropriate applications. Some examples of success stories include: helping Medicare beneficiaries compare Part D prescription plans to find the most cost-effective plan, helping those new to Medicare to understand the basics, and helping clients gain approval for a Medicare Savings Program which can eliminate the monthly Part B premium deduction as well as assist with co-pays and cost-sharing. Additionally, the program is designed to make appropriate referrals to community agencies whenever necessary. So, if you are looking for a challenging and rewarding volunteer experience where you can make a difference in someone's life and also educate yourself, this is the position for you. If you are having trouble managing the cost of your insurance and prescriptions, please contact the program for assistance. For more information contact:

Carmen Pangilinan
CWAG Program Coordinator
414-817-0030.

Volunteering Tradition

Volunteering is an all-American tradition. In fact, some 45 million Americans participate in volunteer activities and 15 million — about one third — of those who volunteer are older persons. Despite the large number of people who share their time and talents, however, the needs of our communities and the nation outstrip the number of people who volunteer.

Older Americans, especially retirees, are in an excellent position to volunteer. They not only have the time, but the experience and expertise to help in a variety of activities.

*In compliance with the American Disabilities Act,
this newsletter is available in alternative formats
for persons with sensory disabilities. Call 289-6874.*



Milwaukee County
Department on Aging

The Agenda is published quarterly by the Milwaukee County Department on Aging for the purpose of increasing the awareness of older adults about services, issues and opportunities available to them in the community, as well as promoting advocacy.

The Department on Aging welcomes suggestions, questions and constructive criticism. If you have comments, call 289-5973.

Stephanie Sue Stein, Director, Milwaukee County Department on Aging,
310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53203

Alice Kowalski—Editor 289-5973

Senior Citizen Hall of Fame



Margaret Cary

Margaret Cary

Margaret "Maggie" Cary's tireless combination of compassion and dedication have led her to be described by St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care employees as "faithful, loyal, devoted, reliable, and trustworthy." A St. Ann client explains that Maggie is "more than a volunteer," but also "a friend, a tutor, and confidant."

After retiring from her career as a social worker, teacher, and legal assistant, Maggie has generously volunteered her time to numerous organizations. Spending four days a week at St. Ann Center, she is active in fundraising, greeting and socializing with clients, advocating for effective intergenerational care at the Center and in the community, and even traveling to Cameroon and China to support the same mission. Additionally, Maggie tutors special education students at Honey Creek Elementary School, prepares teens with special needs for sacraments at ARISE, and participates on the parish council and other ministries at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.

Maggie's remarkable contributions have led her to be awarded a Faithful Citizen-

ship Award from the Christian Stewardship Foundation in 2005 and to be interviewed about her service on Milwaukee Public Radio (WUWM.) However, one of her supporters notes that, "it is the little things Maggie does for clients with great love and compassion that make her an invaluable volunteer."



Belle Garfinkel

Belle Garfinkel

Belle Garfinkel is a remarkable example of service to her community and is a true blessing for Milwaukee County, where she has lived her entire life. After a career as a secretary, she began volunteering at the Jewish Home and Care Center in 1969, at the age of 66, and continued to do so for over forty years. At the Jewish Home, Belle acted as a "day hostess" and friendly visitor, pouring tea for residents and visiting them in their rooms. Isolated residents especially looked forward to her "cheery and comforting visits."

Belle has also been active with the Milwaukee Chapter of Hadassah, which she originally joined in 1943. "Since then, she has held just about every volunteer position in the organization." Her tireless work led her to be awarded the Kesselman Senior Service

Award grand prize from the Milwaukee Jewish Federation in 2005, at the age of 103.

Belle's concern for others and warm presence over the years have brought "smiles and comfort to many of the residents who have come and gone" through the Jewish Home. One of her supporters rightfully states, "her unselfish giving of her time is an example for younger generations to follow."



Oscar Kornblum

Oscar Kornblum

Oscar Kornblum is the sort of person that any community would be lucky to have. A dedicated resident of Brown Deer for over forty years, one supporter notes that he "exemplifies volunteerism in all aspects." Oscar has contributed countless hours to numerous organizations as well as making himself available to individuals who may need assistance with home repairs. "He is always willing to lend a helping hand."

Oscar's contributions to his community include: 29 years as a volunteer fire fighter; helping to develop the Wisconsin Burn Camp; actively participating in the Brown Dee Senior Citizen Club; conducting wood-working classes for seniors

and youth; assisting the Brown Deer School District in dismantling and installing new bleachers; volunteering with the North Shore Health Department; assisting with and managing the food box distribution program for the Brown Deer dining site; making Our Lady of Good Hope church more wheelchair accessible; volunteering with the Senior Tax Exchange Program; and, serving on the Brown Deer Water Commission and School District Facilities Study Committee.

Oscar is a graduate of the Brown Deer Citizen's Police Academy and the Senior Statesmen Program. In 2004, he was honored as the Brown Deer Citizen of the Year. The Brown Deer Village Board noted that his "amazing zest for life and eagerness to take on new challenges make him a positive role model for peers."



Grace Ogle

Grace Ogle

Grace Ogle's positive attitude, sense of humor, and cheerfulness are infectious to everyone she encounters. One supporter noted about her work at the Kelly Senior Center, "she always has a smile and

Hall of Fame, *cont. on p. 5*

Hall of Fame,

cont. from p. 4

something cheerful to say to anyone who walks in the Center's doors."

Grace has selflessly given her time to numerous organizations and projects, including: the Milwaukee County Department on Aging Nutrition Council, where she served as Vice President for six years; Interfaith Retired Senior Volunteer Program, through which she provided telephone reassurance; Aurora Shoo the Flu Clinics, for which she has been an area captain; Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups; St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church; Women's Lutheran Services; and Kelly Senior Center, where she has had multiple roles. She is a 2007 graduate of the Milwaukee County Senior Statesmen Program and spends any extra time crocheting for those in need, corresponding with wounded service women, and supporting veteran's groups.

Grace was honored in 2008 for her service to Kelly Senior Center and received Recognition for Civic Participation in 2007 by the USA Freedom Corps. A supporter notes, "the countless deeds that she carries out at the Kelly Center and throughout the community have made measurable improvements in the basic well-being and quality of life

of seniors and other residents of Milwaukee County."



Agnes Reinhard

Agnes Reinhard

Agnes Reinhard's energetic and passionate service has enriched the lives of countless Milwaukee County residents. Described by one supporter as "an extraordinary woman who has a multitude of gifts and talents" and "a shining example of the best qualities that older Americans could aspire to," Agnes is truly deserving of this honor.

Agnes is committed to promoting "a healthy lifestyle for seniors." She has served on the Executive Board of the Wisconsin Senior Olympics for 16 years and is active in promoting and fundraising for this important event. In 2001, she was inducted into the Wisconsin Senior Olympics Inaugural Hall of Fame and this year she will receive the Wisconsin Senior Olympics Service Award. She also gives her time to the YMCA, working as a fitness instruc-

tor; several fairs and festivals; the Great American Clean-Up; runs held throughout the community; Dave and Carol's Miracle Marathon phone bank; Badger Trails, Inc. hikes; and, the Milwaukee Turner's women's exercise class. Additionally, Agnes has been active for years in both Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, through which she has "touched thousands of lives."

Beyond being a remarkable volunteer, Agnes is an inspirational athlete. She has won over 500 medals in competition, run the Boston Marathon four times, and carried the 1996 Olympic Torch in one leg of its journey through Milwaukee.



Shirley Spelt

Shirley Spelt

Shirley Spelt has used her many talents to make her community a better place for all of its residents. A supporter notes, "she sets a very high standard of accomplishment for herself," which she meets time and again, and, "no job

is too big or too small for Shirley."

Shirley has begun as a volunteer with the Shorewood Senior Center in the 1960's and is currently active with the Elder Services Advisory Board. When the original center disbanded, she was instrumental in creating the current Shorewood Resource Center in 2000 and has since held leadership roles in overseeing it. Shirley is also active with the Coalition for Wisconsin Aging Groups, Shoo the Flu clinics, Connecting Caring Communities-Shorewood, Plymouth Church, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Broadway Theater Center, the Federated Library System, the Urban Ecology Center, the Association of University Women, the Mortar Board-Alumni Club, and the Shorewood Historical Society. For the latter, Shirley used her skills to help the group publish two books on Shorewood history and to collect oral histories from residents. She is also a poll worker and a graduate of the Milwaukee County Senior Statesmen Program.

Shirley cites her mother as her inspiration and role model. However, one supporter notes that Shirley is now inspiring others: "You can see why Shirley is a role model and friend for many of us who know and admire her."

The Milwaukee County Senior Citizen Hall of Fame honors older adults in Milwaukee County who have made significant contributions to the community

Established in 1997, the Senior Hall of Fame honors five outstanding seniors in Milwaukee County who have served the community as volunteers and as advocates on behalf of the elderly. The Commission on Aging appoints a committee to review nominations for the Hall of Fame Award. This committee then recommends five seniors from the applicants to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

- * Nominees must be at least 60 years of age and residents of Milwaukee County
- * Nominations must be received at the Milwaukee County

Department on Aging by February 15, 2010

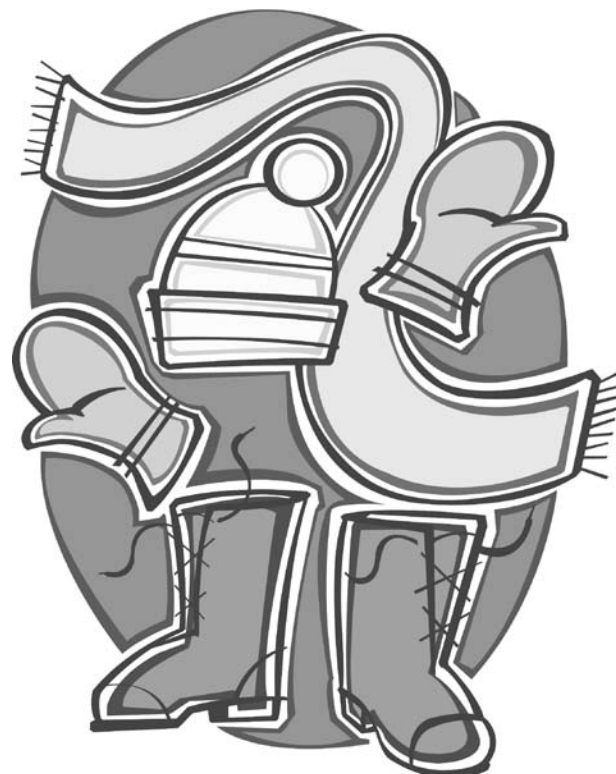
* Nominees must show distinguished volunteer service in any one or combination of the following categories:

- * voluntary service of an educational, community or humanitarian nature
- * exceptional contributions as a volunteer in efforts to improve the lives of people regardless of race, creed or national origin
- * voluntary service in advocacy on behalf of Wisconsin senior citizens

**Milwaukee County Senior Citizen Hall of Fame
Nomination Information
COVER PAGE**



Attach cover page to additional nomination information and return to:
Milwaukee County Department on Aging
Hall of Fame Selection Committee
310 West Wisconsin Avenue 7th Floor, East Tower
Milwaukee, WI 53203



Dress for the Weather

Wear several layers of loose fitting, light-weight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. The outer garments should be tightly woven and water repellent.

Wear mittens, which are warmer than gloves.

Wear a hat.

Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.

Know Your Winter Storm and Extreme Cold Terms

Familiarize yourself with these terms to help identify a winter storm hazard:

Freezing Rain

Rain that freezes when it hits the ground, creating a coating of ice on roads, walkways, trees, and power lines.

Sleet

Rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes moisture on roads to freeze and become slippery.

Winter Storm Watch

A winter storm is possible in your area. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for more information.

Winter Storm Warning

A winter storm is occurring or will soon occur in your area.

Blizzard Warning

Sustained winds or frequent gusts to 35 miles per hour or greater and considerable amounts of falling or blowing snow (reducing visibility to less than a quarter mile) are expected to prevail for a period of three hours or longer.

Frost/Freeze Warning

Below freezing temperatures are expected.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE NOMINEE

Last name _____ First Name _____ Initial _____

Address _____ City, State _____ Zip code _____

Telephone () _____ Date of Birth _____

Length of Residency in Milwaukee County _____

Current Occupation or Former Occupation if retired _____

Was nominee advised by sponsor of nomination? Yes ___ No ___

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SPONSOR

Name _____ Telephone () _____

Agency or Organization (if applicable) _____

Address _____ City, State _____ Zip code _____

Contact person (if different from above) _____

Telephone () _____

Milwaukee County Senior Citizen Hall of Fame Nominee Information, Guidelines and Nomination Cover Sheet

Nominee Information:

1. Nominees must be 60 years of age or above, living and residents of Milwaukee County.
2. Up to five awardees will be chosen.
3. Nominees must qualify in any one or combination of the following areas:
(Please stress volunteer activities, including number of volunteer hours in the previous two years.)
 - a. Gave voluntary service of an educational, community, or humanitarian nature.
 - b. Made exceptional contributions as a volunteer in efforts to improve the lives of people regardless of race, creed, or national origin.
 - c. Advocated as a volunteer on behalf of Wisconsin senior citizens.
4. Prior submissions can be resubmitted. **Information must be updated.**
5. No special award categories will be given.
6. Nominations may be accompanied by letters of endorsements.
7. Individuals may not nominate themselves.
8. The cover form provided must be included with the nomination.
9. Paid work in any category will not be considered.
10. An individual or group may not nominate more than one person per year.
11. Members of the selection committee and the Commission on Aging are not eligible for nomination in the year they serve in any of these capacities.

Guidelines for Nominating Someone for the Hall of Fame:

Fill out the cover page provided **AND USE EXTRA PAGES** to answer the following completely, and concisely:

1. Specify nominee's active participation in:
 - a. Groups and organizations:
List name of each organization, nominee's involvement, and years of affiliation.
 - b. Specify additional activities, achievements and awards, including dates.
 - c. List specific volunteer activities.
Include explanation of duties, accomplishments, and/or responsibilities that demonstrate exceptional volunteerism.
2. Estimate **total volunteer hours in the previous two years** preceding the date of nomination, if applicable.
3. What special characteristics of your nominee make him or her worthy of placement in the Milwaukee County Senior Citizen Hall of Fame?
4. Attach related and supporting documents such as letters of endorsement.
5. **The cover page provided must be filled out completely and included as part of the nomination.**

Return Nominations to:
Milwaukee County Department on Aging
Hall of Fame Selection Committee
310 West Wisconsin Avenue 7th Floor East Tower
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Nominations must be post marked or hand
delivered to the Department on Aging by
February 15, 2010

Additional forms available by calling (414) 289-6873 or at www.milwaukee.gov/county/aging

Repondez s'il vous plait

RSVP is French for please respond and I am hoping that you will. This is an invitation to join a national network of active Americans, 55+, who are making a big impact through out the United States. There is an RSVP group right here in Milwaukee County, it is one of the ten programs sponsored by Interfaith Older Adult Programs. Sharing their life experiences and making an impact in their own communities for over 25 years is what RSVP is all about. In 2008, RSVP linked over 400 volunteers with over 100 different nonprofits and provided over 99,000 hours of service. That is impressive.

Volunteer positions are available year round, seven days per week, varied hours of each day. With a simple phone call, your interests, skills and location can be matched to an exciting opportunity. Everything from tutoring, feeding the hungry, helping the environment, tour guides, ushers, gardening or friendly phone calling to name only a few. We are the experts at volunteer placement.

RSVP staff members always work hard connecting people to opportunities, but during these past few months, there is added activity with people needing to connect to volunteer agencies for employment help. With the current state of the economy, job seekers are flocking to volunteering to keep their skills polished, test new job fields and network. A winning situation for all involved.

This fall, we will be gearing up for our one on one elementary school reading program. Our tutors do not need specialized backgrounds in reading or education; they only need to spend a little extra time reading with a child. Can you give a few hours per week to increase the chances a child will succeed in school? We are also in need of crafters, collectors and hobby enthusiasts to share with elementary students at small school fairs.

There are many benefits of joining RSVP, including supplemental accident and liability insurance, limited mileage reimbursement, personal satisfaction, improved health and meeting new people. Please consider joining other Americans and Milwaukee County residents in making a difference. It is free, easy and worth your time. **Call 414-220-8655 or visit our website at www.interfaithmilw.org to learn more about RSVP in Milwaukee County.**

I am personally inviting you to RSVP today: Repondez s'il vous plait

RSVP

What do senior citizens get out of volunteering?

Over 18 million senior citizens in this country have already discovered the sense of purpose and accomplishment that comes from running a church rummage sale, teaching English, or recruiting donors for a blood drive. And the work comes with a hefty bonus: Seniors who volunteer may actually add years to their lives.

Researchers at the University of Michigan discovered a remarkable link between volunteer work and longevity by surveying 1,211 adults over 65 (mostly retirees) in 1986 and checking

A Fond farewell to Carrie Henning-Smith....

Milwaukee County Dept on Aging (MCDA) was honored to have Carrie Henning-Smith placed here as a "post graduate fellow" from the Center for Population Health, UW-Madison, from 2007 to 2009.

Ms. Smith offered leadership and organization to the projects she worked on at MCDA. She was a much valued addition to our staff for the time she worked here.

Her fellowship has ended and she has moved on to other endeavors. She has left us with the benefits of her work.

Best wishes to Carrie Henning-Smith as she continues to develop her work and educational experience.

Tom Frazier is Retiring

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups (CWAG) executive director, Tom Frazier will retire on Dec. 31, 2009. He has been the executive director since 1983.

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups is a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan federation of 600 member organizations interested in improving the quality of life for Wisconsin Seniors. The Coalition was very instrumental in promoting both the SeniorCare prescription drug program and the Family Care long-term care programs.

Mr. Frazier took the fledgling nonprofit, from a staff of two and annual budget of \$60,000 to a leader in education, training, leadership and advocacy with a staff of 20 and an annual budget of \$1,000,000.

Mr. Frazier was also the registered lobbyist for the organization; he worked with the legislators and their staff for both state and federal government.

Mr. Frazier has had a successful career with the Coalition and he will be missed.

Tom intends to continue to contribute to advocacy and leadership in new and different ways.

Thank you, Tom, for your tremendous accomplishments. We look forward to your new endeavors.

up on them eight years later. The subjects who volunteered at least 40 hours each year to a single cause were 40 percent more likely than nonvolunteers to be alive at the end of study. The trend held even when researchers took differences in the two groups' incomes, health, and number of weekly social interactions into account. Interestingly, focus seemed to be crucial: Volunteers who spread their time among several organizations didn't gain an advantage in longevity.

Of course, senior citizens who volunteer their time do much more than help themselves. Their experience, expertise, and attitude make them valuable members of many organizations. According to the Administration on Aging, the demand for older volunteers is increasing dramatically. If you have the hours to spare, somebody can use your talents.

What is Shingles?

Shingles is a disease that affects nerves and causes pain and blisters in adults. It is caused by the same varicella-zoster virus (VZV) that causes chickenpox in children. After you recover from chickenpox, the virus does not leave your body, but continues to live in some nerve cells. For reasons that aren't totally understood, the virus can become active instead of remaining inactive. When it's activated in adults, it produces shingles.

Most adults live with the VZV virus in their body and never get shingles. About one in five people who have had chickenpox will get shingles later in life. With shingles, the blisters tend to be clustered in one specific area, rather than scattered all over the body like chickenpox.

When the activated virus travels along the path of a nerve to the surface of the skin, a rash will appear. It usually shows up as a band on one side of the face or body. The word "shingles" comes from the Latin word for belt because that's often the shape of the rash. Having shingles doesn't mean that you have any other underlying disease such as cancer.

Who Is At Risk?

Anyone with the varicella-zoster virus in their body can be at risk for getting shingles. Right now there is no way of knowing who will get the disease. But, there are things that make you more likely to get shingles.

Advanced age. The risk of getting shingles increases as you



age. People have a hard time fighting off infections as they get older. The chance of getting shingles becomes much higher by age 70.

Trouble fighting infections. Your immune system is the part of your body that fights off infections. Age can affect your immune system. So can an HIV infection, cancer, cancer drugs, radiation treatments, too much sun, or organ transplant. Even stress or a cold can weaken your immune system for a short time and put you at risk for shingles.

What Are the Symptoms of Shingles?

- ✚ Most people have some of the following symptoms.
- ✚ Burning, tingling, or numbness of the skin
- ✚ Feeling sick—chills, fever, upset stomach, or headache
- ✚ Fluid-filled blisters
- ✚ Skin that is sensitive to touch
- ✚ Mild itching to strong pain

Shingles follows a pattern. A few days after the tingling or burning feeling on the skin, a red rash will come out on your body, face, or neck. In a few days, the rash will turn into

fluid-filled blisters. The blisters dry up and crust over within several days. The rash usually happens on one side of the body. Most cases of shingles last from 3 to 5 weeks.

You Should See A Doctor

George, age 67, had a red rash on his face and felt sick. His wife urged him to see a doctor, but he told her, "It's just a rash. I'll be all right in a few days." His wife insisted that he go to the doctor. The doctor told George that he had shingles and ordered some medicine for him.

It's important to go to your doctor no later than 3 days after the rash starts. The doctor needs to see the rash to confirm that you have shingles and make a treatment plan. Although there is no cure for shingles, early treatment with drugs that fight the virus can help the blisters dry up faster and prevent the severe pain. Shingles can often be treated at home. Patients with shingles rarely need to stay in a hospital.

Why Does the Pain Go On and On?

After the rash goes away, some people may be left with long lasting pain called post-herpetic neuralgia or PHN. The pain is felt in the same area where the rash had been. For some people, PHN is the longest lasting and worst part of shingles. The older you are when you get shingles, the greater your chance of developing PHN.

"I've had post-herpetic neuralgia for nine months," said Pete, an 80-year-old man. "I can't find anything that helps with the pain."

The PHN pain can cause depression, anxiety, sleepless-

ness, and weight loss. Some people with PHN find it hard to go about their daily activities like dressing, cooking, and eating. Talk to your doctor if you have any of these problems. There are medicines that may help. Steroids may lessen the pain and shorten the time you're sick. Analgesics, antidepressants, and anticonvulsants may reduce the pain. Usually PHN will get better over time.

Prevent Shingles — A Vaccine

A vaccine that may keep you from getting shingles has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. You should ask your doctor if the shingles vaccine is right for you. It is available for people age 60 and older.

What About Complications?

In some cases, the blisters caused by shingles can become infected. This may leave a scar. Your doctor can prescribe an antibiotic treatment. Keep the area clean and try not to scratch.

There are other problems to watch for. Blisters near or in the eye can cause lasting eye damage or blindness. Also, hearing loss, a brief paralysis of the face, or in a small number of cases, swelling of the brain (encephalitis) can occur. If you have blisters on your face, it's important to see the doctor as soon as you notice a rash.

Can You Catch Shingles?

No, shingles is not a contagious disease. You can't catch shingles from someone who has it. But, you can catch chickenpox from someone with shingles. So, if you've never had chickenpox, try to stay away from anyone who has shingles.

Flo, a 77-year-old woman says, "My daughter stayed away when I had shingles. She'd never had

Shingles, cont. on back page



Milwaukee County Department on Aging
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Milwaukee, WI 53203
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Half a Million Volunteers

The Administration on Aging enlists 500,000 volunteers nationwide, many of them senior citizens, to help older people in need. (Studies have found that senior citizen volunteers are especially effective at aiding the elderly.) Volunteer activities include delivering meals to the homebound, escorting frail seniors to needed services, repairing homes of low-income and frail seniors, assisting at senior centers, and counseling older people on health, nutrition, and finances. All of these volunteer activities are available to Milwaukee County seniors.

Shingles, cont. from p. 7

chickenpox and didn't want to risk catching it. Good thing my sister lived nearby and could help me during those first few weeks."

Will Shingles Return?

Most people get shingles only once. But it is possible to have it more than once.

What Can You Do?

If you have shingles, here are some things that may make you feel better:

Make sure you get enough rest, avoid stress as much as you can, and eat well-balanced meals.

Simple exercises like stretching or walking can help. Check with your doctor first.

Dip a washcloth in cool water and apply it to your blisters to ease the pain and help dry the blisters.

Do things that take your mind off your pain. Watch TV, read interesting books, talk with friends, or work on a hobby you like.

Try to relax. Stress can make the pain worse. Listen to music that helps you relax.

Share your feelings about your pain with family and friends. Ask for their help.